

Protesters continue calling for public inquiry into native activist's death

SARNIA, Ont. (CP) - The day after what would have been Dudley George's 43rd birthday, protesters took to the city's streets in a march calling for a public inquiry into his death.

The demand has resonated in several speeches and protests since Sept. 6, 1995, when George was shot and killed by acting Sgt. Kenneth Deane.

George and dozens of other natives had been confronted by provincial police as they protested the alleged desecration of their ancestors' burial grounds at Ipperwash Provincial Park. The 150 marchers paused in front of the courthouse where Deane was found guilty in 1997 of criminal negligence causing death. The court ruled Deane knew George was unarmed when he shot him.

George's brother Pierre told the crowd that his late brother's death was completely avoidable. "It just makes me sad that I have to be in front of a building they call the justice building the day after his 43rd birthday," he said. "But I am also proud that I defended his homeland,

Aazhoodena, Stoney Point. He was a defender of the sacred burial ground and he laid his life down."

As they moved through the city, chanting protesters carried signs that read "Ken Deane is not in this alone", "Justice for Dudley George", and "(Premier) Mike Harris has blood on his hands".

George's family is currently suing Harris and some members of his cabinet over the incident. The family alleges the individuals named in the lawsuit ordered the police to "utilize force, including deadly force" against George and that they failed to ensure that the police employed "techniques of patience, restraint and negotiation," according to court documents.

Saturday's march ended at the Point Edward provincial police station, where a lone police supporter stood holding a small sign that read "We support the OPP and Ken."